

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 were examined. Claims 1, 12, and 17 are amended. No claims are cancelled or newly presented. No new matter has been introduced. Applicants have amended the claim and title to correct for the informalities cited by the Examiner.

Independent Claims 1, 12, and 17 Are Allowable over the cited references

Amended claim 1 recites a distributed stack of programmable network devices. The distributed stack comprises a first plurality of programmable network devices, the first plurality of programmable network devices in communication via a first bus, such that the first plurality of programmable network devices includes a first plurality of modules, the first plurality of modules performing a first plurality of network protocols. The distributed stack comprises a second plurality of programmable network devices, the second plurality of programmable network devices in communication via a second bus, such that the second plurality of programmable network devices includes a second plurality of modules, the second plurality of modules performing a second plurality of network protocols, wherein the first bus and the second bus are coupled via the Internet. The claim is also amended to recite that the **modules on the network devices are configured to be remotely loaded, unloaded, or modified to facilitate service changes without interrupting network traffic routed through the network devices**.

Support can be found in the specification at several locations such as but not limited to page 5, lines 16-22 and page 6, lines 8-16. Claims 12 and 17 include similar language. Accordingly, claims 1, 12, and 17 are now in condition for allowance.

Dependent claims 2-11, 13-16, and 18-21 are also allowable because, among other reasons, they depend from allowable base claims.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is in form for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, including petition fees and extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 08-1641 (Docket No. 39829-0002).

Respectfully submitted,

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